

Lille winger Eden Hazard is attracting the attention of Real Madrid, with club ambassador Zinedine Zidane paying tribute to the teenager's impact in France. Hazard, 19, is a Belgian international and has won rave reviews for his performances in Ligue 1. Hazard is being linked with a move to one of Europe's elite clubs and Real Madrid are evidently first in the queue. "What he is doing is extraordinary for his club," Zidane told Canal+. "I have spoken about him in Madrid, but not to Jose Mourinho. Anyway, he will know." Asked if a potential move could take place, Zidane replied: "It may."



SPORT

DHAKA TUESDAY NOVEMBER 30, 2010, E-MAIL: sports@thedailystar.net

Zim fail first test

SPORTS REPORTER

Zimbabwe's batting was found wanting against the slow bowlers as BCB XI set the tone for the Tigers with a 29-run victory over the visitors in the limited-over practice match at the BKSP cricket ground yesterday.

It was promising leg spinner Nur Hossain who hogged the spotlight taking three wickets as Zimbabwe were bundled out for 194 runs in 46.1 overs in reply to the home side's 223 for nine in their stipulated 50 overs.

"We set the tone for the national team and there should not be any question about the 5-0 margin in favour of us. And I firmly believe the national team will win all the matches against this Zimbabwean side," said BCB XI skipper Shahriar Nafees, who was dropped despite an impressive showing against New Zealand in the last home series.

"Their bowling and fielding is really good but the batting was exposed against the slow bowlers. They will definitely struggle against our quality spinners in the series," added the left-handed batsman, who made only 10 in the match.

Coach Minhajul Abedin also echoed the sentiment, but heaped praise on the Zimbabwean bowling attack.

"I must say they (Zimbabwe) have a decent bowling attack. Their two pace bowlers (Chris Mpofu and Keegan Meth) exploited the conditions brilliantly and their spinners also looked very good and bowled in a disciplined manner. But the real problem is their weakness when batting against the spinners," said Minhajul.

The former national skipper also thought highly of young leg-spinner Nur Hossain who ruptured the Zimbabwean middle order after pacers Syed Rassel and Alauddin Babu had removed dangerous Hamilton Masakadza (0) and Brendan Taylor (17).

Tatenda Taibu (32) and Chamu Chibhabha (24) tried hard to repair the damage but never looked comfortable against the home spin attack. Two beautiful deliveries from Nur Hossain sent

both the batsmen back to the pavilion.

Fazle Mahmud, Asif Ahmed, Mahmudul Hasan and Alok Kapali gave Nur Hossain good support but at least two Zimbabwean batsmen were unlucky as the leg-before decisions went against them.

Tottering at 108 for seven, Meth (25) and Prosper Utseya (26) staged a fightback during their 53-run eighth wicket partnership but both were trapped in front against Asif who also contributed with the bat by making the team's second-highest of 46.

Earlier, lanky pacemen Mpofu and Meth shattered the BCB XI innings. Meth was the most successful bowler with four wickets for 46 runs while Mpofu captured three for 37 runs.

The Zimbabwean spinners might not be leading wicket takers in the match but Raymond Price, Utseya and Graeme Cremer gave the indication that they are well prepared to offer a challenge to the Bangladesh batsmen on the spin friendly tracks.

Wicketkeeper batsman Sahagir Hossain was top scorer for the local side with an 84-ball 49 that featured three boundaries.

Zimbabwe coach Alan Butcher and bowling coach Heath Streak were not too disappointed with the outcome in the practice match.

"The middle order batsmen should take the responsibility. But we are not disappointed with the outcome as we experimented here before the one-day series," said Butcher.

"It's just a practice game. It will be a different ball game day after tomorrow," said Streak.

The first one-dayer of the five-match series will take place at the Sher-e-Bangla National Stadium in Mirpur tomorrow.

BRIEF SCORES
BCB XI: 223 for nine in 50 overs (Mahmud 30, Asif 46, Sahagir 49, Mahmudul 28, Mpofu 3-37, Meth 4-46, Price 1-19, Cremer 1-36).
ZIMBABWE: 194 all out in 46.1 overs (Chibhabha 24, Taibu 32, Meth 25, Utseya 26, Cremer 21 not out, Rassel 1-38, Fazle 1-33, Babu 1-16, Nur 3-40, Asif 2-22, Kapali 1-13).
Result: BCB XI won by 29 runs.



Asian Games gold winner Mohammad Ashraf (L) is in an animated discussion with Bangladesh captain Shakib Al Hasan (R) during a practice session at Mirpur yesterday, ahead of the Zimbabwe series, which starts on December 1.

ICC CRICKET WORLD CUP HISTORY

New stars galore

World Cups often work as a process of regeneration as new upstarts start to take centre stage and old hands move to the side, leaving their final marks on public memory by performing in a global event. So it was with the 1987 World Cup, where a lot of champion cricketers took their initial steps on the global stage.

It was the last World Cup for all-time greats like West Indian Viv Richards -- undoubtedly the best batsman in World Cups till then -- and India's Sunil Gavaskar, the latter making his last international appearance in the event. Both players went out with a bang. Gavaskar, ironically perhaps, finally found his feet in the format and hit his first century, an unbeaten 103 off 88 balls, in his penultimate match against New Zealand. Richards hit 181 against Sri Lanka at the Karachi National Stadium, which was a world record at the time. Pakistan legend Imran Khan, the second-highest wicket-taker in 1987, announced his retirement at the end of his team's semifinal loss against Australia, but as the world knows he went on to play till 1992. It was also the last World Cup for West Indian keeper Jeff Dujon.

As some great names bowed out, and a high number of future luminaries announced themselves in the 1987 World Cup. It was the first World Cup for arguably the greatest left-arm bowler of all time, Pakistan's swing king Wasim Akram. It was also a Cup debut for West Indies' Courtney Walsh, Richie Richardson, Carl Hooper, all future Test captains. It was a great Cup start for Windies allrounder Phil Simmons, scoring a couple of fifties and a sparkling 89 against Sri Lanka.

Some great Australian names typifying the toughness and aggression synonymous with Australian cricket made people sit up and take notice. It was also a young team, with a lot of the players playing in their first World Cup. David Boon, the second-highest run-getter of the tournament, made regular contributions with the bat, and was in no small way



BCB XI leg-spinner Noor Hossain punches the air in celebration after taking one of his three wickets during their 29-run win against the touring Zimbabweans in a practice match at the BKSP yesterday.

Middle-order Tigers' cause for concern

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh cricket coach Jamie Siddons expressed his concern over the middle-order batting on the eve of the Micromax ODI Cup against Zimbabwe at the Sher-e-Bangla National Cricket Stadium yesterday.

Despite the 4-0 whitewash in their last series over New Zealand in October, number 3 and 4 batting positions has been a real worry for the think tank. Junaed Siddiqui at three looked out of sorts, while at number four, Rokibul Hasan, Mohammad Ashraf, and Jahurul Islam have been tried repeatedly and by turn, but with very little success. Ashraf though has been rewarded for his recent good form in the domestic league and will have to fight out with Rokibul for that position with the World Cup knocking at the door.

The coach, who was speaking at the pre-series press conference, expects

whoever gets the opportunity, and if both of them get a chance to play in the five match series, must step up and make full use of it. Siddons also thinks that the return of Tamim Iqbal and Mashrafe Bin Mortaza will bolster the side greatly, not that it will ensure a cakewalk for the home side.

"The way we played against New Zealand, we should beat Zimbabwe. But they are also an improving team and we will have to be at our best to beat Zimbabwe," said Siddons.

"I'm not concerned about the final scoreline, we just have to make sure we win the series, it doesn't matter whether it's 3-2. Most importantly I want all the players to step up unlike the last series which in most cases was a one-man show."

The Australian also pointed out the Powerplay overs as the crucial junctures of the game where the Tigers needed to improve.

"We gotta keep improving, especially in the first 10 overs and the last five, in both batting and bowling departments. Batters must step up and score few more runs to

take the pressure when they bowl."

Siddons's protege, Shakib Al Hasan, gave due credit to the opposition for their recent progress and expected a good series. Having ducked a question on his 'imposed' captaincy, Shakib preferred not to dwell on matters such as game plan or team selection and rather he looked forward to the job at hand, which is winning the first match.

"We are looking forward to winning the series. We are focusing on the first game at the moment, once we get a good start, we can think of the next game."

As per the points of concern, Shakib thinks that if they can improve on the little mistakes they made in the last series, they can expect to win easily.

"There would be a lot of expectation on us after a successful series against the New Zealand. If we can play our best and overcome the small mistakes we made in the last series, we will beat them."

Shakib is also a little concerned about the number four batting position, though

U-17 booters falter in qtrs

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh U-17 football team's impressive run in the 51st Subrata Mukherjee Cup ended in the quarterfinals when they suffered a 5-4 defeat to Army Boys in tie-breaker at the Ambedkar Stadium in Indian capital of Delhi yesterday.

The game rolled into shootout after the regulation time produced no goal. Bangladesh's Masud Rana failed to convert while Malek, Rakib, Russel and Tapu found the back of the net.

Records roll at the Gabba



AFP, Brisbane

England head to this week's second Adelaide Test with all the momentum after dominating Australia over the final two days of the Ashes opener which ended in a draw at the Gabba on Monday.

England ensured they would not be beaten in the first match of their Ashes defence after conceding a 221-run innings deficit when Alastair Cook and Jonathan

Trott shared in England's highest partnership in Australia of 329 runs.

Cook became only the fourth Englishman to score a Test double-century in Australia with his uncon-

ENG DOUBLE TONNERS

Following is a list of England's double centuries in Ashes Tests in Australia:

287	Reg Foster, Sydney 1903
251	Wally Hammond, Sydney 1928
235no	Alastair Cook, Brisbane 2010
231no	Wally Hammond, Sydney 1936
206	Paul Collingwood, Adelaide 2006
200	Wally Hammond, Melbourne 1928

quered 235, while Trott hit 135 not out before skipper Andrew Strauss called a halt at 517 for one, 40 minutes before tea.

Australia tried to avoid further collateral damage in their 26 overs to the close and were 107 for one when the match finished in a draw.

Ricky Ponting scored his 56th Test half-century to be 51 not out and Shane Watson was on 41.

"We take a huge amount out of the Test, there's no doubt about it," Strauss said.

"We did some very good things with the ball. The resili-

ence to come back into the game, being in a pretty dire position after Day Three, speaks volumes for the characters of the likes of Cook and Trott.

"We've also proved over a while now that we're a hard side to beat and that gives us more confidence going forward."

Ponting said pacemen Doug Bollinger and Ryan Harris had been added to the squad for the Adelaide Test.

"There's no doubt that we have a lot of improvement to do with our bowling group over the last couple of days," he said, adding that Australia's ability to get up to 100 runs quickly in the final session highlighted the difficult bowling conditions.

NATIONAL CYCLING Ansars top table again

SPORTS REPORTER

Bangladesh Ansar and VDP defied the challenge of the Bangladesh Jute Mills Corporation (BJMC) to finish on top of the 34th NCC Bank National Cycling Championships at the Bangabandhu National Stadium yesterday.

BJMC threatened to topple the three-time top-finishers on the first day of their return to the sport after a three-year gap, but the Ansars grew in confidence on way to grabbing 11 gold, 11 silver and the bronze medals to top the table.

BJMC finished behind Ansars with seven gold, eight silver and as many bronze while

Captain hails Cook



AFP, Brisbane

Skipper Andrew Strauss lauded Alastair Cook's match-turning double century in Monday's drawn first Ashes Test as one of English cricket's most valuable innings ever.

England faced looming defeat at the Gabba after going behind by 221 runs in the first innings, only to reply with a massive 517 for one in their second innings, with Cook hitting an unbeaten 235, to see off the threat.

Cook became only the fourth Englishman to score a Test double-century in Australia and shared in England's highest partnership Down Under of 329 runs with Jonathan Trott, who was 135 not out when Strauss declared 40 minutes before tea.

Cook, sitting alongside Strauss at the post-match press conference, raised his eyes when Strauss launched into an appreciation of his

contribution to saving the opening Test for the Ashes holders.

"I'd be hard pressed to think of a better innings in Australia," Strauss said.

"It must be a long time ago, the last guy who batted as well as Cooky did."

"The concentration to see it through for such a long period of time, that's one of the really special innings for an England player."

The team vice-captain came into the series with an average of just 26.21 in 10 previous Tests against Australia, while averaging 46 against other teams.

But he has killed off his detractors with an impressive return in Brisbane of 67 and 235 not out.

"It's cricket, isn't it," the Essex left-hander said. "It's amazing how quickly it turns around. It's one of those things where you keep working at the right things and keep believing you're a good player that you get your results."

"We start again very quickly on Friday so



England opener Alastair Cook acknowledges the cheers on reaching his double century on his way to an unbeaten 235 as England piled on 517 for 1 on the fifth day of the first Test against Australia at Brisbane yesterday.

SPORTS POLL
Should the national selectors include Mohammad Ashraf for the series against Zim?
No 61.6%
Yes 36.6%

TOTAL VOTES: 279

WEEKLY QUESTION
Do you think the selectors were too harsh on Shahriar Nafees?
Visit the sports page of www.thedailystar.net to cast vote

Follow The Daily Star Sport on **twitter**
www.twitter.com/dssport